

Testimony
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
Public Hearing
March 5, 2009

**HB 6335 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH
CENTER FACILITIES PLAN**

Senator Handley, Representative Willis and Members of the Higher Education and Advancement Committee, my name is Adam Silverman, and I reside in Simsbury, Connecticut. I am here today to speak in support of **HB 6335, An Act Concerning the University of Connecticut Health Center Facilities Plan.**

I am a physician, an educator, an administrator, and a researcher. I have been at the University of Connecticut Health Center for almost eight years. Over that period of time my career has been rejuvenated. The opportunities that this integrated academic health center have offered me in terms of my career development have been unparalleled. The marriage of the laboratory, the classroom, and the hospital in one geographic location have enabled an interdisciplinary collaboration across many domains that would not have been possible otherwise.

But of course, this is the message that you are hearing a lot today. What can I tell you differently? Would it help you to know that I was initially skeptical of an affiliation with Hartford Hospital? Well I was. I was afraid that in our current financial crisis that this would not be a merger of equals. I was afraid that the private practice culture of Hartford Hospital and its medical staff, along with its attendant attention to profit, would overwhelm the non-financial but equally as critical missions of our academic health center.

However, as one that has been involved in the negotiations with my colleagues at Hartford Hospital, I have had my skepticism reversed. Over the past six months I have become convinced that a merger with our colleagues in Hartford will catalyze tremendous health care growth and innovation in our state. By merging our expertise in research, education, and innovation with Hartford Health Care's financial stewardship and vision for clinical excellence we have a rare opportunity to move from good to great. We have an opportunity to revolutionize health care delivery.

Through this merger we can create hope. Hope of a better life for each of us. Hope for breakthroughs and cures in the treatment of diseases like diabetes, cancer, and heart disease. Hope for new jobs. Hope for new investments. Hope for attracting the best of the best in research, patient care, and education to our state.

It will be easy for some, in our current financial morass, to think short-sightedly and extinguish hope.

But I would submit to you that short-sightedness, in part, has contributed to our current financial situation. In this troubled time, I would like to see us be able to look to the future and make an investment in something that will not just provide dividends for those that come after us; but, will immediately have a positive impact on the health of Connecticut.

This will take courage, there is no question. I ask you to let this merger occur and authorize the construction of a new state of the art facility in Farmington. Let this project be the catalyst upon which we rely to drive the type of growth and development in our region that is necessary for our state's future. Thank you.